



"With regard to their moral code, the principles of the Unitarians do not seem admit their loosening, in the least, the bonds of duty; on the contrary, they appear to be actuated by an earnest desire to promote practical religion. . . . Love is, with them, the fulfilling of the law; and the habitual practice of virtue, from the principles of love to God and benevolence to man, is, in their judgment, 'the sum and substance of Christianity.'"—ROBERT ADAM: *Religious World Displayed*, Art. "Unitarians," vol. ii. p. 173.

"In their [the Unitarian] body I number many of the friends of my early days; . . . men who dignify and adorn the stations which they occupy in society; some of whom will leave their names to posterity, identified with the improvements of science, the cultivation of the arts which embellish human life, and the grand schemes of philanthropy by which the present condition of man is elevated and purified, have I had the honour of numbering among my friends."—REV. DR. THOMAS BYRTH: *Lecture on Unitarian Interpretation; Liverpool Controversy*, p. 159.

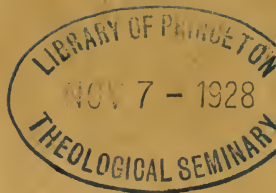
"There can be no doubt, that, by the existing law, the sect of Unitarians is entitled to the fullest measure of toleration; and it would be absurd to hold, that there was anything to corrupt virtue, or outrage decency, in tenets which have been advocated in our own days by men of such eminent talents, exemplary piety, and pure lives, as Price, Priestley, and Channing, and to which there is reason to think neither Milton nor Newton was disinclined."—LORD EFFREY; *apud Christian Reformer*, new series, vol. vi. p. 194.

"Many of the teachers of this [the Unitarian] heresy are thoroughly skilled in scholastic theology, logic, and metaphysics; in history, antiquities, philology, and modern science; well versed in the ancient languages; bold and subtle biblical critics; prepared to take advantage of an imprudent or incautious adversary; and thus to triumph over truth itself in the eyes of superficial observers, when their sophistry seems to get the victory over its unskilful defender."—PROFESSOR PHILIP LINDSLY: *A Plea for the Theol. Seminary at Princeton, N.J.*, pp. 28-9. 3rd edit., 1821.

"The denial of the Divinity of Christ is undoubtedly a great error; and an error which, if admitted, leads to many other great and injurious errors. But it is undoubtedly the error of many noble and ingenuous minds, and of many devout and earnest Christians. . . . Grotius, Le Clerc, and Wetstein, in Holland; and Whiston, Samuel Clarke, Lardner, Locke, Newton, and Milton, in England,—are all reckoned among the rejecters of the Supreme Divinity of Christ. A list of more illustrious names and more eminent Christians could hardly be found."—LEICESTER A. SAWYER: *Organic Christianity*, pp. 408-9, 415. [Mr. Sawyer mistakes in representing Grotius and Le Clerc as Unitarians: they themselves professed to be Trinitarians.]

"Newton and Locke were esteemed Socinians; Lardner was an avowed one; Clarke and Whiston were declared Arians; Bull and Waterland were professed Athanasians. Who will take upon him to say that these men were not equal to each other in probity and Scriptural knowledge? And, if that be admitted, surely we ought to learn no other lesson from the diversity of their opinions, except that of perfect moderation and good-will towards all those who happen to differ from ourselves."—BISHOP WATSON: *Appendix to Theol. Tracts*, vol. vi.

CRIME:



ITS CAUSES AND CURE.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN THE REMONSTRANT PRESBYTERIAN MEETING-HOUSE,  
YORK-STREET, BELFAST,

ON SUNDAY EVENING, 16TH DECEMBER, 1849,

BY

DAVID MAGINNIS,

MINISTER OF THE CONGREGATION.

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Published by Request.

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MDCCCL.

It is with reluctance I consent to the publication of this Lecture: chiefly, because the views it contains are not developed as I could wish. The limits of a discourse are inadequate to a satisfactory discussion of so extensive a subject. Some points have been altogether omitted: others, which required a full consideration, are only briefly noticed. Yet, as friends, in whose judgment I can confide, have requested its publication, I do not feel at liberty to withhold it. And, I have only to add, that, if my humble effort increase the interest of any, in the causes and cure of crime, I shall be perfectly satisfied.

D. M.

*Belfast, 4th January, 1850.*



# A LECTURE.

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A SUBJECT of great importance invites our attention : CRIME—its CAUSES and CURE.

The existence and prevalence of crime, no one, I think, will venture to deny. Crime abounds. It pervades society. It is committed by the young and the old ; by the rich and the poor ; by the ignorant and the learned. No age, no grade, no sex, but contributes its share.

By an inspection, some time ago, of the magistrates' books, at the police office, I found that, in our own town, during the first five months of the current year, 2,970 persons had been brought before the authorities, charged with offences and crimes of different kinds ;—being, at an average, within a fraction of 20 per day. At the same rate, the year would furnish upwards of 7,000 cases.

For all Ireland, according to a parliamentary return, recently published, the number of committals to prison, during the past year, was 39,116,—exclusive of all cases summarily disposed of by magistrates. Of the 39,000, and upwards, committed, nearly 20,000 were convicted ; and, of these, 69 were sentenced to death, 77 to transportation for life, and 2,572 to transportation for various other periods.

The criminal returns for England and Wales show, that, in 1848, 30,349 persons were committed for trial ; and that 22,890 of these were found guilty and sentenced—60 to death, 67 to transportation for life, upwards of 3000 to transportation for different periods, and the remainder to imprisonment, fines, &c.

These returns exhibit a large amount of crime, in England and Ireland. A close approximation, however, to its real extent, would be obtained, if all the cases charged and tried before the magistrates were included. In that case, according to a calculation, in the *Daily News*, the annual aggregate, for the United Kingdom, would exceed 200,000.

Assuming that we have here a correct calculation of the numbers annually incarcerated, in these countries, the estimate, large though it seems, falls far short of conveying an accurate idea of the extent of crime. How many offences, of different kinds, are perpetrated, which,

from various causes, are never punished! How many crimes are committed by men whose names are never heard in any court of justice! How much theft passes undetected; or its perpetrators undiscovered! How many good-natured, easy-tempered people allow offenders to escape, rather than undertake the trouble of a public prosecution.

And, then, what trimming and refined criminality have we, which set at defiance "the powers that be"—which, "with coach-and-six," drive through the most stringent measures; and, yet, never appear in any criminal or police returns;—with oppressions, cruelties, slanderings, defamations, seductions, and the like, which there are either ineffectual or inoperative laws, or, perhaps, none at all, to punish;—not to speak of the innumerable offences, against the Creator's laws, which do not come within the jurisdiction of any human tribunal: so that, taking all these things into account, police and parliamentary returns, or any calculation founded thereon, can give only a very imperfect idea of the amount of crime in any country. Fearful is its extent!

As to the condition of those tried in our courts—let any one take the trouble of examining the cases, reported in the public prints, and he will discover criminals in every variety of worldly circumstances, and in every stage of intellectual enlightenment. Engaged in deeds of darkest infamy may be found, not only the oppressed and poverty-stricken, but those, also, occupying positions which society regards honourable and elevated; not only the illiterate and the untrained, but the learned, also—men whose education and office required them to be ensamples to others, in all purity and virtue.

A deep, dark, and wide-spread gulf, then, is crime—fed from many sources. Its tributaries arise in every corner of society. And, what is a very serious consideration, all existing influences appear insufficient to prevent its increase. In England and Wales, the committals have very considerably increased. In the space of thirty-five years, from 1805 till 1840, the period to which the tables,\* which I consulted, refer—it appears that they have more than tripled. In the year 1805, they were in the proportion of 1 to every 2,046 of the whole population; in 1840, they were as 1 to every 534.† And, I dare say, had we the means of similarly testing the state of crime in other countries, it would be found that in them, also, it has been increasing.

It must be admitted, however, that, every year, the police laws are more strictly enforced; and that, in consequence, without any actual increase, the returns would indicate an increasing criminality. Yet, after making the largest allowance for the greater efficiency of the detective laws, we cannot, I fear, thus account for a nearly-quadrupled criminality; especially, when we bear in mind, that, during the period

\* *Wade's History and Political Philosophy of the Middle and Working Classes; People's Edition*, p. 170.

† The criminal returns, for 1848, presented to parliament, last session, exhibit a continued increase of crime amongst the population of England and Wales. The number of committals, for the last five years, has been: 26,542 in 1844; 24,303 in 1845; 25,107 in 1846; 28,833 in 1847; and 30,349 in 1848.

in question, civilization was alleged to be rapidly progressing among us, and enlightenment advancing with giant's strides. Schools had sprung up, and were in active operation, in every corner; and every hamlet had its moral and spiritual guides to direct the people's feet in the paths of duty. Under these circumstances, we would have expected that crime would rapidly diminish; and that, notwithstanding the stricter operation of police laws, the school-house and the church would thin the jail. Yet, not so. Schools have been multiplied throughout the land; consecrated buildings for the destruction of sin and satan are as numerous as bakers' shops; crime-doctors, without number, are employed, and many of them richly endowed, to apply their several nostrums; and, yet, crime is not diminishing, but rather increasing, swelling around us. Serious, in the extreme; and very suggestive of the question—How comes it?

The unsatisfactory results of the efforts that have been made for the repression of crime, lead us to fear that its real nature and causes, and, consequently, its cure, also, are, generally, very imperfectly understood. Indeed, I believe it is so: else, so gigantic and expensive efforts would not be so fruitless. I fear, that, generally, they are wrongly directed. In our attempts to remove crime, we seldom reach its roots: and, until we do, no superincumbent power, however weighty, will be sufficient to destroy it. Its causes must be carefully sought out, and judiciously treated. We must labour more, and chiefly, to remove them, and less to crush its manifestations. Our aim should be—not to keep breaking off, crushing to the ground a branch or shoot here and there, instead of which, twice as many others will spring up, but, to get at the roots, to lay them bare; and, the roots naked and without nutriment, the trunk will, necessarily, become sapless, and its branches leafless and fruitless.

Crime, I believe, has a deeper root than crime-destroyers seem to suppose. It lies deep in the human constitution. All men have natural tendencies to crime, as well as to love, or veneration, or virtue. When these tendencies, either from endowment, or education, or both combined, are unduly strong, and no influence of sufficient power exists to control or counteract them, crime is the necessary unavoidable result.

Popular opinion, and prevailing superstitions—which are never so false as not to contain any vein of truth—recognise, in part at least, the principle laid down; but coupled with such absurdities as render it of no avail to the removal of crime. When a crime is committed under no strong external temptation, it is at once attributed to some controlling power within, leading to sin. And, as the effect must be traced to some personal cause, that controlling power, the people at once designate: the devil is its name. "I could not get over it: the devil tempted me: the devil overcame me, and drove me to it," we frequently hear the untempted transgressor say, in palliation of his offence,—admitting the existence of an inward influence, which, through ignorance of his own nature, he ascribes to the fancied author of all ill.



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This view is confirmed by many passages in the New Testament. In the account of "the temptation," the evil thoughts that sprung up in the mind of Jesus, are represented as the suggestions of the devil. When Judas formed the fiendish idea of betraying his master, it is the devil that was said to have inspired it. When Ananias lied, it was satan filled his heart. Wicked men are described as the children of the devil, as possessed of the devil, as having the evil one dwelling in them. The same idea is less figuratively expressed by Paul, when he describes the sinner as the carnal, the carnally-minded—the man in whom the sensual and the animal predominate; and, by James, when he traces sin to "lust"—to man's own untrained appetites, and unrestrained passions; thus supporting the doctrine, we have laid down, that, in man himself, lies the undeveloped germ of the vilest criminal, as well as of the purest Christian—of the blackest sinner, as well as of the holiest saint.

To render perfectly intelligible our position, thus recognised by popular opinion, and confirmed by scripture authority, it is necessary to understand the nature of the constitution which God has bestowed upon us, and of the laws, agreeably to which, it is governed and acts. Wherever man is found, he exhibits a three-fold nature; an *animal* nature, a *mental* nature, and a *moral* and *spiritual* nature. This classification of the natural endowments of man, is in no way affected by the decision of the question, as to whether the mind and soul are separate and distinct from each other, or are one and the same endowment, discharging two different functions. Nay; should it be decided that man is possessed of no higher power than springs from his superior organization, the classification I have mentioned would still be perfectly just, as embracing the three great distinctive characteristics, which man everywhere exhibits, as a *sensual*, a *thinking*, and a *religious* being; or, if it be preferred, as a being possessed of an animal existence, a reasoning power, and a religious principle. Each of these three powers, or endowments, has its own sphere of action—its own specific duties. When we act under their combined influence, the intellectual and moral powers controlling the animal, elevated virtue is the result. But when the animal powers are not under the control of the higher faculties, a life of degrading irregularities is the unavoidable consequence. And, especially serious and dangerous is the result, when the animal powers call to their aid the intellectual; for, alone—being, with the moral, impulsive in their operations—although they may produce frequent outbursts of passionate and even brutal attacks upon person and property, they are, notwithstanding, much less dangerous than when assisted by the powers of the intellect. Then, their schemes become deep, and their evil purposes carefully concealed, so that their object is the more securely attained.

Now, as no two persons are born with physical constitutions in all respects alike, so, in no two persons does it appear that those natural powers are exactly alike. They exist under every possible form of combination, from the lowest animal and sensual, up to the highest



moral and spiritual state, in which man appears; and, when we add to this difference in the *materiel*, almost as great a variety in the *make*, in the circumstances under which human beings are trained, there can be little difficulty in accounting for the vast, the endless variety which appears in human character.

The man, in whose constitution the animal naturally predominates, (unless a careful training draw out, develop the higher powers, and give them the control of the lower,) will as naturally be a sensual and criminal being, as the lion lives on prey, or the ox on pasture. And, when such a person is placed in circumstances that develop his natural tendencies, fearful must be the result. Even when the individual is endowed with a well-balanced constitution, no class of powers naturally predominating, the influence of example and of strong temptation, often sadly deranges his whole character; and, especially, when he is placed in circumstances, which, while they strengthen the animal propensities and develop the mental powers, leave the moral nature untutored, untrained. But when, as in the case supposed, the animal powers, naturally strong, are cherished to the comparative neglect of the others, or in conjunction with the mental, and to the neglect of the moral and spiritual, there will exist a tendency to crime which all the laws in the universe, if they allow the individual his liberty, could not repress. You will not frighten the tiger from his prey, by threatening him with the treadmill or the cat-o'-nine-tails.

Crime has, thus, its roots deep in the natural constitution of man. It springs either from a naturally ill-balanced constitution, in which the animal is predominant and not counteracted by the moral training; or, which is much more frequently the case, from a naturally well-balanced constitution, in whose training, circumstances favour the development of the lower powers and afford no suitable provision for the higher. In either case, the result is the same: before temptation we fall, and crime is unavoidable.

This view of crime and its causes removes, in my opinion, many difficulties, and accounts for many facts, which, otherwise, would be inexplicable. Those who look upon knowledge as the grand panacea for the world's woes—who think that knowledge acquired is the highest education and a sufficient safeguard against all ill, are astonished that after such efforts, public and private, to disseminate knowledge, crime is not diminishing; and some are so confounded by the fact that they are driven to the conclusion that knowledge promotes crime. They find that a large proportion of criminals possess a considerable amount of knowledge, and not a few are among what would be called the educated. Thus, in England, in 1840, of the criminals in the manufacturing counties, while but 31 per cent. were unable to read and write, nearly 68 per cent. could read and write, some imperfectly, some well. And, in 1848, while considerably under 10,000 of the 30,349 committed for trial, in England and Wales, were unable to read and write, upwards of 20,000 could both read and write. And frequent instances occur of persons received, having what is re-

garded a superior education, guilty of some of the basest crimes— theft, adultery, and even murder. It is a notorious fact that there are ladies of rank, fortune, and education, on whom assistants require to keep a close eye, on account of their shop-lifting propensities—under no temptation to commit theft, yet driven to it by an apparently irresistible impulse. Persons, too, engaged in the highest and holiest concerns of life—even those ministering at the altars of the Most High—not unfrequently fall into the lowest depths of wickedness. These facts confound those whose confidence is in knowledge; and are explicable, I think, only in accordance with the doctrines I have advanced, viz.: that criminal tendencies are constitutional; and that knowledge, of itself, is not sufficient to remove crime, it being perfectly possible for the vilest crimes and the profoundest knowledge to co-exist.

Having spoken so much of man's inherent tendencies to crime, I must now proceed to notice some of the various influences which exercise a strong control over these tendencies, in determining their power and directing their manifestations. Among these, an early place must be assigned to *race*, which appears to considerably affect the criminal tendencies. M. Quetelet, a French author, who has devoted much attention to the statistics of crime, on the continent, has been led, by his investigations, to the adoption of this opinion. For its illustration he takes his own country, the population of which consists of three different races—Celtic, Germanic, and Pelasgian—which occupy, without much intermixture, three different districts. From the criminal returns of the several departments, it appears that there is a marked difference in the races, the Celtic, which includes three-fifths of the entire population, being much the freest from crime.\*

It appears, also, that age,† sex,‡ climate,§ and even the seasons,|| ex-

\* *Quetelet's Treatise on Man; people's edition*, p. 88, et seq.; where the influences of race is considered at length.

+ "Of all the causes which influence the development of the propensity to crime, or which diminish the propensity, age is unquestionably the most energetic. Indeed, it is through age that the physical powers and passions of man are developed, and their energy afterwards decreases with age. The propensity to crime must be almost nothing at the two extremes of life, since, on the one hand, strength and passion have scarcely begun to exist, and, on the other hand, their energy, nearly extinguished, is still further deadened by the influence of reason. On the contrary, the propensity to crime is at its maximum at the age when strength and passion have attained their maximum, and when reason has not acquired sufficient power to govern their combined influence."—*Quetelet*, pp. 92, 93. Returns confirm this position. "It is calculated that amongst the persons living in England and Wales, from 17 to 21 years of age, there is one committal for 232; while, from 41 to 50, there is one for 941; and, above 60, one for 3,391 individuals. We thus see how great an influence the strong and unregulated feelings of youth exercise in inducing criminality."—*Chambers's Information for the People*, p. 560. —The ages of those committed in England and Wales, during 1848, were, according to the recent parliamentary return: under 15 years of age—1,087; 15 and under 20—7,232; 20 and under 25—7,637; 25 and under 30—4,673; 30 and under 40—5,099; 40 and under 50—2,610; 50 and under 60—1,040; 60 and upwards—530; not ascertained—442.

‡ "There are some crimes which women are not, from various causes, liable to commit; but the gentler does not appear to be the honester sex; for the proportion of female to male committals for theft, without violence, is as 84 to 73 per cent.—a difference of one-sixth against females."—*Chambers's Statistics*, p. 559. Quetelet shows,

ercise no inconsiderable influence upon crime. But,—to pass from these influences, which are so little under human control, to others, whose connexion with the production of crime is easily traced, and whose consideration is more important, as they are capable of being either entirely removed, or greatly modified,—we mention, in the first place, an agent of much evil:—

**I. EXAMPLE.**—Example, however, is not (as will be readily seen by those who receive the view I have advanced,) a primary or direct cause of crime; yet, it has much influence on crime. It increases and perpetuates it; provides raw recruits, and trains them for the service. Who, that is well acquainted with society, can doubt that the examples of many parents have a most ruinous influence upon their children? Thousands, whose souls are steeped in sin, were first led, by those whom God designed to be their instructors, in all that is good and pure, to use their tongues in falsehood, their hands in theft, and their persons in pollution. The homes of such are hotbeds of crime—training-schools for the jail, the penal settlements, or the gallows. And, even when example is much less corrupt, it is often not less dangerous in its effects. A small spark will ignite gunpowder, and may cause a serious explosion. A single instance of falsehood discovered, of justice violated, may give an impulse to the evil principles of the youthful mind, which will not be easily overcome. An action, in itself of little or no importance, often becomes the precedent for others which lead to much excess and sin. Not unfrequently, a thoughtless expression, dropt in the presence of youth, is caught up, treasured, acts upon the unformed mind, breaks open the hitherto sealed springs of passion and appetite, until unholy thoughts inundate the soul, driving away before them every principle which would offer them resistance. Example, then, and especially parental example, has a powerful influence in strengthening and developing the natural tendencies to crime.

however, that there is only 1 woman before the courts to 4 men; and accounts for the difference in the criminality thus:—To the commission of crime three conditions are essential: the will, which depends upon the person's morality, the opportunity, and the facility of effecting it. Now, the reason why females have less propensity to crime than males, is the consequence of their being more under the influence of shame and modesty, their retired habits, and their physical weakness. In poisoning, the number of accusations against males and females is nearly equal; while, in cases of infanticide, of 456 charges, 426 are against women, and only 30 against men. But, when force becomes necessary for the commission of crime, the number of women accused becomes much fewer than of men. It is not the degree of the crime which keeps women back, so much as their habits and sedentary life. They can conceive and execute guilty projects on persons with whom they are in the greatest intimacy. Compared with man, her assassinations are oftener in her family than out of it.—*Man*, pp. 90, 91.

§ Climate appears to have some influence, especially in the propensity to crimes against persons. This observation is confirmed, at least among the races of southern climates, such as the Pelasgian race, scattered over the shores of the Mediterranean and Corsica, on the one hand; and the Italians, mixed with Dalmatians and Tyrolese, on the other. We observe, also, that severe climates, which give rise to the greatest number of wants, also give rise to the greatest number of crimes against property.—*Quetelet*, p. 95.

|| The seasons exercise a very marked influence on crime. Thus, during summer, the greatest number of crimes against persons is committed: the contrary takes place during winter.—*Quetelet*, p. 90.



II. **INTEMPERANCE** is another promoter of crime. It is one of its most powerful secondary causes. It dethrones, for the time, reason and judgment. The animal powers have then full control; and, the passions and propensities of the animal nature completely predominant, we can expect nothing rational or manly. We then obey the dictates, the impulses, of appetite. Hence, the many quarrels, debauches, thefts, murders, and other crimes, which are committed under the influence of intoxication,\* when conscience is deposed, and passion reigns.

III. Crime is, also, greatly increased by **POVERTY**. To outrages innumerable, on property and on person, does it lead. And, when we consider what distress exists among the people, from want of employment, from oppression, and other causes; and that beside the greatest abundance, and large stores of unused wealth, we cannot feel astonished that the untrained mind is often impelled to outrage and to violence.

When the care-torn, toil-worn poor, in their moments of reflection, look around, and learn the luxury and the state in which fortune's favourites live—men who never toiled a day in their lives; if they have a mile or two to go, on pleasure or on business, fine horses are at hand to carry them, or a splendid carriage to convey them; they fare sumptuously every day, and enjoy every earthly comfort that riches can procure; and when, from this picture, they turn to the hard realities of their own lot, to their privations, their sufferings, their distresses, is it in untrained, uneducated human nature, reared, probably, under none of the kindest home-influences, to repress the rising feeling of envy and discontent? and, especially, if the thought suggests itself, (as it often has,) that the rich lord of the broad estate holds an inheritance which, if usage sanctions, justice, in his mind, does not approve and confirm. And this feeling, we can easily conceive, will not long be dormant. It seeks its opportunity for gratification. If cherished only by a few, who are too insignificant to openly resist the laws, private outrage on person or on property, is the consequence; but, if it be shared by a people, who, from their numbers, fear not collision with the authorities, open attack is the result. In either case, crime follows.

\* Of 1,129 murders committed in France, during the space of four years, (according to Quetelet, p. 96,) 446 were in consequence of quarrels and contentions in taverns.—Mr. Hill, an inspector of prisons, reports that, in making his inspections, he asked the governor of each prison, "what he considered to be the chief causes of crime, in his district;" and he does not remember a single instance in which, in the answers, drunkenness did not stand at the head of the list.—Mr. Smith, the governor of Edinburgh prison, says, "that intemperance was, beyond all question, the chief cause of crime in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood."—Judge Wightman, in addressing the Grand Jury at Liverpool, in 1846, said, that "he found, from a perusal of the depositions, one unfailing cause—for four-fifths of these crimes was, as it was in every other calendar, the besetting sin of drunkenness. In almost all cases of personal violence and injury, the scene was a public-house or beer-shop, and the parties were exasperated and inflamed by intoxication." And W. Entwistle, M.P., foreman of the Grand Jury, said—"The jury, having concluded their examinations of the cases submitted to them, feel it their imperative duty, to place on record their opinion as to the prevalent habit of drunkenness being the cause of, at least, four-fifths of the offences comprised in this and all other calendars."



But poverty, pinching poverty, often leads more directly to crime. A poor man, by hard labour, earns his shilling or eighteen-pence a-day. He has a wife, and four or five children, all dependant on his earnings for support. After paying house-rent, coal and candle, by the strictest economy, his wages are made to provide a supply of the plainest, cheapest food for the household. Comforts are out of the question. Clothing need not be thought of "till the times mend." A month's sickness occurs, or constant employment ceases, and he becomes dependent on such odd days' work as he can procure; probably he is not employed half-time, (as is often the case with hundreds of the labouring population, and even good tradesmen, in our own town.) By and by, he is still less fortunate. Sometimes, with difficulty, he gets a day in the week. What is to become of his family? Already, whatever articles of clothing or of furniture could, at all, be spared, have been parted with; and yet life can scarcely be kept in. His little ones are wasting away; and the wife, whom he has long and tenderly loved, is sinking to the grave, by parting with her own morsel, to preserve the lives of their common offspring. What is to be done?—The workhouse? No. The natural feelings of independence and of parental love resist. The industrious have a strong dislike to the poor-house. Hope, however dim or distant, is eagerly clung to, in preference. They will take their chance, trusting to a brighter future.—After a weary and sleepless night, breakfastless, he goes forth, with heavy heart, in quest of employment, leaving behind him not as much food as would give a hearty meal to one of his children; yet, it must suffice for all. He is unsuccessful. Though offering to work for any wages, work he cannot get. Homewards now he turns. Yet, how will he enter his home? Faint and weak with hunger though he be, all thoughts of himself vanish before other feelings. His wife and children! What a day have they spent! How have they been able to bear the gnawing pangs of hunger! Though not unused to sore distress and many hardships, this was to them a day of unusual suffering. With what hope and fear is his return waited for! Oh! what bitter cries pierce his ear and rend his heart, when they hear the now almost daily-repeated tale, "no work!" Cries for bread, and none to give. How can he bear it? for the poor man has a heart, as well as the rich man; and, though he may not be able to manifest them with the polished refinement of others, he feels no less strongly the natural affections that are common to all mankind. He loves his children as tenderly as does the rich man—perhaps more so; and when he hears those children crying for the bread that he cannot procure, though willing to toil for it, and sees luxury flowing around him in golden streams, is there not thrown in his way a temptation to crime, too strong for human nature, not carefully trained, to resist? What wonder if a wife, or hardiest child, is sent out to solicit the charity of the town, or to get money or bread whatever way she can! What wonder if he himself, madened by the influences of such a scene, with wild and fierce determination rushes out, to take, by deceit or violence, what he could

not earn by honest industry! First thefts, both by parents and children, are, no doubt, often committed under such circumstances; but seldom, especially in the case of children, the last. Here are the criminal tendencies receive a powerful impulse.

Poverty leads to another form of crime, in comparison with which, theft, in the circumstances just supposed, would be almost guiltless—I mean *female prostitution*. Of this dreadful and ruinous vice, poverty is a fertile cause. A gentleman,\* engaged by a leading London journal, to inquire into and report upon, the state of the metropolitan industrious and labouring population, has, among other important relations, fully established this point. He has shewn, on evidence most carefully collected, by interviews with large numbers of the

\* The commissioner has made several reports to the *Morning Chronicle*, on the subject. From those most painfully-interesting communications, we take the following extracts:—Speaking of one of the meetings of slop-workers and needle-women, attended by persons, who were admitted by tickets, which had been privately distributed, the commissioner says, that “never was such a sight seen, or such tales heard. There sat men and girls, some with babies suckling at their breasts; others in rags, and even these borrowed, in order that they might come and tell their misery to the world. I have witnessed many a scene of sorrow lately; I have heard stories that have unmanned me; but never, till last Wednesday, had I heard or seen anything so solemn, so terrible as this.”—At another meeting, 62 females were present; and of these, the earnings, for the previous week, were—21 under 1s.; 7 under 1s. 6d.; 6 under 2s., &c.; and they all agreed that they must work hard, and sit up till 12 or 1 o’clock at night, to eke from 6d. to 9d.; and that, taking one week’s earnings with another, 1s. 6d. a week might be the average earnings throughout the year. They were unanimous in declaring that a large number in the trade, probably one-fourth or one-half, resorted to the streets, to eke out a living.—Subsequently, a still larger meeting was held, at which, from 1,000 to 1,200 of the unfortunate creatures were present—some clad in the habiliments of respectable poverty, but by far the greater part appeared in rags. Selman had a mass of greater misery and destitution met together to stir the mercy of mankind against the cruel necessities of a hard fate, and to petition for the birthright of existence against the face of circumstances. A few extracts will confirm our words. Of these 1,000 or 1,200 women, three or four, but certainly not more, held up their hands in token of their possession of underclothing: only 58 had blankets; 1 had no bed to lie on; 92 had earned under a shilling the previous week, and 233 had had no work at all.—On another occasion, the commissioner learned, from one middle-aged woman, that she worked at trousers-making, and got only 4d. or 5d. for making a pair. She added, “I have been driven to prostitution sometimes, not for want of ways, through the bad prices. For the sake of my lodgings and a bit of bread, I’ve been obliged to do what I am very sorry to do, and look upon with disgust. I can’t live by what I get by work!” Another woman, with scarcely any clothing, who worked at the same trade, said, “the most she could earn was 1s. 6d. or 2s.; and that she lived with a man, although not married to him, for the sake of her support.” Another declared her “firm belief, before God and man, that three out of every four of the young women of London, who do slop-work, are obliged to resort to private or public prostitution, to enable them to live.” A shirtmaker confesses: “I make about three shirts a day, at 2½d. a piece, every one of them having seven button-holes. I have to get up at six in the morning and work till twelve at night. I buy thread out of the price; and cannot always get work. I am now living (in concubinage) with a young man. I am compelled to do so, because I could not support myself.” “I can’t,” says another of these unhappy creatures, “earn 4d. a-day. Unless I was to go to other means, it couldn’t be in my power to do anything to support myself. I don’t do it from inclination.” “In another case—and not a solitary one—it was the holiest of nature’s instincts that, perverted and maddened by hopeless and helpless misery, overcame womanly honour and virtue. It was the fond mother of a dying child, who, after painfully struggling to nourish and save her boy on the wages of shirtmaking; at last found it impossible to get on; and ‘then,’ she adds, ‘a man, lodging in the house, was anxious to get a partner, and made offers to me; I thought it better to accept them than do worse; and, on his promising to be good to me, I did comply!’” Such is the horrible alternative which these miserable beings have to choose from—the workhouse, concubinage, or prostitution.



class, individually, and also collectively, that the London needle-women, as a class, are in a most miserable condition; and that, very frequently, they are driven to prostitution, to enable them to live! It is calculated, that, in the metropolis, there are upwards of 33,000 needle-women; more than 28,000 of whom are under the age of twenty, and whose earnings average only from  $4\frac{1}{4}$ d. to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. a-day! Upwards of 28,000 young women who, by toiling hard and long, can daily earn only three or four pence each! When, out of this, they pay for lodgings (as many of them, being orphans, have to do,) for coal and candle, how much is left for support! Is it much wonder, if, under such circumstances and at such an age, they lend a not unwilling ear to any scheme whereby life may be sustained? Urged, driven on by the iron-hand of hard necessity, they are tempted to part with that pearl of highest value—chastity, and enter upon a course of conduct, which, while it secures against present want, prepares the way for future misery. And, to conceal, as long as possible, the guilt by which they live, how often is crime added to crime, even life being frequently the cost! Through poverty, prostitution derives large supplies, and misery many victims.

Now comes the important question.—Whom are we to blame, for all this crime? Shall all the blame be heaped upon the head of the unfortunate criminal? and, not only blame, but punishment, also? In far the greater number of cases, I believe, the larger share of blame attaches, not to the individual, but to the circumstances in which he was placed, and by which his character was, in a great measure, formed. Who is to be blamed for the starving man's theft, or the London needlewoman's impurity? We do not desire either to excuse or palliate. But, while infamy and punishment are hurled at the head of the helpless, unfortunate offender, the chief cause must not be permitted to escape unexposed. Society, which permits, creates, and perpetuates, the circumstances so promotive of crime is culpable; and should bear its share of the disgrace as it always bears a heavy share of punishment;—for, by a wise arrangement of Providence, the evils which it countenances by example, or causes by oppression or injustice, always recoil upon its own head.

Should we, then, let the individual criminal escape? Certainly not. It would be an additional wrong to the individual. Society, if it would perform its duty, must look to him. It must place him in new circumstances, in which his hitherto-dormant or inactive moral powers shall be cherished, and his animal and criminal curbed; until, by degrees, the moral and spiritual faculties gain ascendancy over the lower passions and appetites. If our system of punishment have not this aim and effect, it is not what the criminal needs. Confinement or torture, as a punishment, may prevent, for the time, the commission of crime; but, though the criminal's propensities are restrained from doing actual injury, they are, probably, only gathering strength, as the pent-up waters, to dash forth with greater impetuosity than ever, when freedom is regained. Hence, how seldom do you find a really reformed criminal—reformed by prison discipline, Possibly,

ear may restrain, for a time; but, generally, it has little influence. Each fresh offence is more enormous than the previous one; and so will it be to the end of the chapter—till punishment effects its proper purpose,—till the prison becomes a moral training-school, an hospital for the treatment of moral invalids, diseased and disordered souls, restoring them to health and soundness.

But, some may be disposed to say—If tendencies to crime are constitutional and inherent, it must be impossible to prevent crime and to cure the criminal; is it not?—To entirely change the natural constitution of the existing race of criminals, is impossible: yet, it may be greatly modified. Cease to use, and bind tightly, an arm, so that the blood cannot freely circulate in it: it will soon become weak and powerless, will shrink and shrivel. So, while you withhold the criminal from the gratification of his criminal tendencies, seek, by judicious training, to direct the nutriment which they monopolised, and on which they became overgrown, into the channels of the hitherto-neglected moral and spiritual nature,—whose powers continue, day by day, to exercise and draw out into healthy action; and the balance will gradually turn.

But, if crime is to be cured, it must be in coming ages. In the present, or the rising generation, or, in fact, in any generation, under existing social arrangements, we need not expect it to seriously diminish. And in those future ages, its cure can be effected in only one way—by the removal of its causes, which, as we have seen, are of two kinds—primary and secondary—the one, inherent, rooted in the constitution; the other, accidental, existing in circumstances.

A well-balanced constitution is the removal of the former—the primary; a constitution in which the animal and criminal propensities shall not unduly preponderate. But, have we any influence in determining the moral tendencies of the unborn? It is affirmed that we have; and analogy seems to support the view. It is an undoubted fact, that parental influence, over the physical constitution of offspring, is very great. In rearing and managing inferior animals, it is constantly recognised and acted on, with unerring success. And, no physiological fact is better established, than that, in the human race, parents, as they observe or neglect the laws of their nature, produce healthy or sickly offspring. Why, on the same principle, may not the natural moral tendencies of the child be determined, by the parent? Why may not a sound and healthy brain be raised, as well as sound and healthy lungs?

The means secured of a sound education, is the removal of the other—the secondary causes. By education we mean not, what often passes by that name; but that thorough training of the whole man, which duly develops all his powers, and yields a harmonious character, whose delight is obedience to the Creator's will: such a training as I endeavoured to explain and recommend in other lectures of this course.

Another word on that school of vice—poverty. Industry must be secured against abject poverty. Before men and women can be



thoroughly virtuous, they must have the means of life. Such distress as, we know, often exists among the unemployed, is too powerful a temptation for poor humanity—a strongly-heated force-bed to crime—enough to overthrow the best balanced mind. Honesty and starvation, on the one hand; dishonesty or impurity and life, on the other! While many heroically prefer the former, not a few choose the latter, with all the sad and woful consequences. Honest industry should never have the choice to make. Man should not be placed in crime-causing circumstances. We must not put the invalid on a bed of thorns, beside a couch of down, and expect him to be comfortable and recover. Neither must the moral invalid be placed in circumstances which promote the disease, and expect a speedy recovery.

In conclusion—more kindness must be shown to the criminal. There must be stronger, warmer sympathy for him. Society owes it. If society is instrumental in perpetuating a state of things which encourages crime, which develops the evil tendencies of our nature and makes no adequate provision for the due culture of the good ones, it is bound to deal tenderly with those who fall. Instead of spurning them from it, society should take them to its bosom; warm, with its own heat, the cold affections of their nature; resuscitate their dormant, deadened souls, and impart unto them new life. We must not expose them injudiciously to the influences that favour their disease, nor harshly chide because they fell; we must seek by kindness—not by cold repulse, nor vengeful punishment—to win them back. We must love them still; ever exhibiting the spirit of Christian sympathy enjoined by the poet, in the following beautiful lines; with which I conclude:—

“Think gently of the erring!

Ye know not of the power,  
With which the dark temptation came,  
In some unguarded hour.  
Ye may not know how earnestly  
They struggled, or how well;  
Until the hour of weakness came,  
And sadly thus they fell.

“Think gently of the erring!

Oh! do not thou forget,  
However darkly stained by sin,  
He is thy brother yet!  
Heir of the self-same heritage,  
Child of the self-same God!  
He has but stumbled in the path,  
Thou hast in weakness trod.

" Speak gently to the erring !

For is it not enough,

That innocence and peace have gone,

Without the censure rough ?

It sure must be a weary lot,

That sin-stain'd heart to bear,

And they who share a happier fate,

Their chidings well may spare.

" Speak gently to the erring !

Thou yet may'st lead them back,

With holy words, and tones of love,

From misery's thorny track.

Forget not thou hast often sinn'd,

And sinful yet must be :

Deal gently with the erring,

As God hath dwelt with thee."

